

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method of storing information on an information appliance comprises organizing individual information contexts, each of which are intended to be used by different applications, as segments within a single linear sequence or string where the different segments are delimited by known bit patterns or by different encoded representations. Reading from and writing to the string can be carried out within the information appliance itself, by a client application operating between the information appliance and a network such as the Internet, or by a remote host performing data exchange with the information appliance over the network. The present invention is also useful in accomplishing security, authentication and identification tasks. In these applications, biometric or other security data including secret/personal information such as pass codes and personal identification numbers or certificates are stored in the string. The security data is accessible by applications to verify the authenticity of the identified user.